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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 47/12 of 29 October 1992, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States", the General Assembly took note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/451) and requested the Secretariat of the United Nations and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (LAS), within their respective fields of competence, inter alia, to intensify further their cooperation towards the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the strengthening of international peace and security.

2. By the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations in order to enhance their capacity to serve the mutual interests of the two organizations in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, cultural and administrative fields; and to coordinate the follow-up action to facilitate the implementation of the proposals of a multilateral nature adopted at the Tunis meeting in 1983, and to take appropriate action regarding the proposals adopted at previous meetings.

3. The General Assembly decided that, in order to intensify cooperation and for the purpose of review and appraisal of progress as well as to prepare comprehensive periodic reports, a general meeting between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States should take place once every two years, and inter-agency sectoral meetings should be organized annually on areas of priority and wide importance in the development of the Arab States.

4. The General Assembly recommended that the next general meeting on cooperation between the representatives of the secretariats of the United Nations system and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations should be held during 1993, in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the first general meeting of cooperation between the two organizations, and also requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the executive heads of the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to cooperate with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States for the success of the meeting and the realization of its objectives.

5. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, to encourage periodic consultation between representatives of the Secretariat of the United Nations and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States to review and strengthen coordination mechanisms with a view to accelerating implementation and follow-up action of multilateral projects, proposals and recommendations adopted by the meetings between the two organizations.

6. The General Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session a progress report on the implementation of the present resolution.

II. CONSULTATIONS AND EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION

7. On 28 September 1992, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat met with the Under-Secretary-General for International Political Affairs, League of Arab States, at United Nations Headquarters. They discussed matters of cooperation between the two organizations, in particular the forthcoming general meeting to be held in 1993 commemorating the tenth anniversary of the first general meeting of cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. They agreed to hold a preparatory meeting between the coordinating secretariats to discuss necessary arrangements for the general meeting.

8. On 30 September 1992, the Secretary-General of the United Nations met with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States at the United Nations Headquarters. They took the opportunity to exchange views on matters of common interest, in particular the promotion of peace and development in the Arab world.

9. The meeting between the coordinating secretariats of the United Nations and the League of Arab States was held at United Nations Headquarters on 10 and 11 May 1993. It considered, among other things, the dates, venue, provisional agenda, programme of work, documentation and level of participation for the general meeting.

10. During the period under review, the secretariats of the United Nations and LAS, as well as the Office of the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations continued to maintain close contact on matters of mutual concern to the two organizations.

III. HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON ARAB CHILD AT TUNIS IN 1992

11. Pursuant to the recommendation of the sectoral meeting between representatives of the United Nations system and the League of Arab States which was held at Geneva on 25 and 26 November 1991, a high-level ministerial meeting on Child Welfare Protection and Development was held at Tunis on 17 and 18 November 1992.

12. The meeting was addressed, among others, by the Prime Minister of Tunisia, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

13. The meeting approved the Pan-Arab Plan for Child Care, Protection and Development. It also adopted six resolutions which constitute an agenda for action for the Arab countries in the 1990s (see paras. 35-39).

IV. FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON PROPOSALS AGREED TO AT PREVIOUS MEETINGS

14. It may be recalled that the joint meeting between representatives of the United Nations system and the League of Arab States, held at Geneva in July 1990 (see A/45/481/Add.1), decided to establish the following six sectoral areas of cooperation between the two organizations:

(a) International peace and security;

(b) Food and agriculture;

(c) Labour, trade, industry and environment;

(d) Social affairs;

(e) Education, science, culture and information;

(f) Communications.

15. A summary of reports of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system on their cooperation with LAS during the period under review is given below. This summary includes the activities in the sectoral areas, as well as the follow-up action on proposals adopted at the previous meetings at Tunis in 1983 (A/38/299 and Corr.1); at Amman in 1985 (A/40/481/Add.1); and at Geneva in 1988 (A/43/509/Add.1) and in 1990 (A/45/481/Add.1).

A. Department of Economic and Social Development

Science and technology

16. The Department of Economic and Social Development participated in various technical cooperation projects in most LAS member countries (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Yemen). The projects involved, inter alia, a science and research centre and activities in the fields of electricity/energy, urban and municipal planning and infrastructure, transport, and new and renewable sources of energy and capacity-building activities.

Demography

17. The Department participated at meetings which involved or were sponsored by LAS, such as the Regional Population Conference held in Jordan, in April 1993.

Statistics

18. The Department continued to work closely with LAS, routinely providing it and its member States with statistical and methodological outputs of the United Nations Statistical Programme. Major progress was made in the implementation of the Pan-Arab Project for Child Development (PAPCHILD) survey programme on Maternal and Child Health in Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, the Sudan, Syrian Arab

Republic and Yemen. An independent evaluation mission took place in May 1993 to assess the first phase of the programme.

19. With regard to PAPCHILD, the Department has an ongoing project of about US$ 763,000 financed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the period 1988-1993. Financial inputs for an additional US$ 2 million were provided by the Arab Gulf Fund, LAS and organizations of the United Nations system to enable the Ministry of Health, national child welfare councils, research and policy studies centres in the Arab region to obtain timely and integrated flow of information for formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes on maternal and child care, health and development, in a cost-effective manner.

20. The second phase of PAPCHILD has a total budget of US$ 3.2 million for a period of 42 months. This phase is aimed at ensuring the undertaking of in-depth data evaluation and comparative analysis of survey data outputs of 12 countries, as well as the holding of a regional conference on the subject. The bulk of these activities will be undertaken primarily by the Population Research Unit of LAS.

Legal advisory services

21. The Department has been executing in various countries, including Algeria, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, a series of advisory and training works in such areas as drafting investment laws and regulations; legal assistance in reconstruction and economic recovery, and in drafting investment codes; and advisory services on the legal aspects relating to the execution of national projects.

Programme support

22. In cooperation with LAS, the Department executed projects in the fields of health, administration and economic research. The Department is also involved in capacity-building activities. The thirteenth meeting of national recruitment services, held at Cairo from 29 March to 2 April 1993, adopted the Cairo Plan of Action which had as the objective the development of human resources and of capacity-building activities. During that meeting, the Government of Tunisia and LAS decided to each host a further search workshop; Tunisia in late 1993, and LAS in early 1994.

23. The Department is further involved in consultancy services aimed at strengthening the administrative capacity of LAS through the development of a comprehensive Administrative Development Plan, and the design and implementation of a comprehensive Management Information System covering all aspects of LAS activities.

B. Department of Humanitarian Affairs

24. During the period under review, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs continued to keep the League of Arab States informed of the relief assistance provided to the Arab countries. In this regard, it mobilized and coordinated assistance to the following member States: Egypt - Following the earthquake

which hit Cairo in October 1992, the Department dispatched a team specializing in search and rescue operations; Djibouti - Assistance was provided within the framework of United Nations efforts to assist the countries in the Horn of Africa; Iraq - The Interagency Humanitarian Programme for Iraq, Kuwait and Iraq/Turkey and Iraq/Iran border areas established in the wake of the Gulf war in 1991 was extended during 1992 and is expected to continue in 1993; Lebanon - Relief assistance was provided following severe and prolonged snow storms affecting Lebanon at the beginning of 1992; Mauritania - the Department is working with the Government to set up a project for the maintenance of trucks which will be used by the Commissionership for Food Security to distribute food aid to remote regions; Somalia - An appeal for humanitarian assistance was launched in July 1992. In October 1992, the first Coordination Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance for Somalia was convened in Geneva by the Department; Sudan - Mobilization and coordination of humanitarian assistance continued in 1992 and is still going on; and Yemen - An appeal for international assistance was launched in February 1993, following flash floods in Aden and the adjacent territories, which affected more than one million people.

25. In the field of disaster preparedness and prevention, the Department has undertaken the following activities in the following countries that are member States of LAS.

Algeria

26. Within the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Department is engaged in a project aimed at setting up guidelines and training for small-building contractors for antiseismic constructions. The project is in progress. A manual is to be published for small-building contractors, for whom a training workshop is scheduled to be held in 1993.

Egypt

27. A joint project with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on "Development of Disaster Preparedness, Prevention and Management Planning" was completed in June 1992. A second stage is being discussed. Two experts were sent to Cairo following the earthquake of October 1992 to investigate structural damage to engineering structures and to formulate recommendations on the organization of disaster preparedness and prevention in the country.

Sudan

28. In cooperation with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) organized the "Regional Meeting on Disasters in Africa" in Addis Ababa in April 1992. The meeting adopted a recommendation to establish a multidisciplinary "Centre for Disasters" which the Government of the Sudan offered to host. The project is still under discussion between the Department, OAU and the Government of the Sudan with a view to defining the overall objectives, as well as the components of the Centre's work programme.

Yemen

29. In May 1992, at the request of the Government of Yemen, a staff member from the Department of Humanitarian Affairs undertook a mission to assess the

relevance and effectiveness of the "Dhamar Earthquake Reconstruction Programme" launched in the aftermath of the 1989 earthquake. The conclusions reached by the mission will be applied to the earthquake reconstruction programme throughout the region.

30. The Department is still waiting to receive from the Arab Interior Ministers Council and LAS, a new appraisal and suggestions regarding the organization of a joint seminar on disaster preparedness and prevention in the Arab countries. The seminar has been postponed several times owing mainly to their lack of adequate participation.

31. A national workshop on disasters, implemented under the Disaster Management Training Programme was held at Khartoum from 25 to 31 January 1993. Similar workshops organized in Lebanon and Yemen have resulted in some seven training modules being translated into Arabic.

32. National workshops are planned to be held in Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic before the end of 1993. In addition, Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia will take part in a regional training workshop for French-speaking African countries to be organized during 1993.

33. Within the framework of United Nations policy to strengthen regional cooperation, the American University of Beirut (Faculty of Health Sciences) was selected as a regional collaborating institution for the implementation of the Disaster Management Training Programme in the Arab States.

C. United Nations Children's Fund

34. The main focus of cooperation between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the League of Arab States was on UNICEF assistance to LAS in organizing a high-level ministerial meeting held in November 1992 at Tunis. In his address at the opening session of the meeting, the Executive Director of UNICEF emphasized support for Arab Governments in their accelerated implementation of their national programmes of action in observance of the commitments made at the World Summit for Children.

35. The meeting approved the Pan-Arab Plan for Child Care, Protection and Development. The resolutions if adopted constitute an ambitious but feasible agenda for action on behalf of Arab children in the 1990s. In addition to providing a framework and reference for the formulation and implementation of the national programmes of action the Pan-Arab Plan can be used as a rallying point for mobilizing regional resources required to attain the proposed goals and targets. The meeting also welcomed the convening of the OAU-sponsored International Conference on Assistance to African Children and called upon the "Arab countries who are members of the Organization of African Unity to attend the meeting and to participate actively in its deliberations and at the highest possible level".

36. To achieve the goals and targets set in the Plan which relate to health, malnutrition, water and sanitation, and primary education, a review of estimated additional resource requirements was undertaken by LAS, with UNICEF support. The review showed that only modest national, regional and international

resources in the amount of US$ 2 billion are needed every year. This estimate amounts to less than 1 per cent of the gross national product of the LAS member countries. Of this amount, US$ 1.4 billion might be provided internally, using national resources; about US$ 600 million will have to be provided externally either from within the LAS member States or from other donor nations and aid agencies.

37. The Plan and the resolutions adopted by the meeting emphasized the achievement of short-term goals in child survival, protection and development, as well as the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Education for females, particularly for girls, was given high priority, as was the protection of children in especially difficult circumstances. UNICEF helped LAS develop a stronger regional perspective on children by supporting the preparation of a regional situation analysis on children, a review of the situation of children in the Maghreb and the Gulf countries, a regional statistical profile on children, as well as an analysis of the region's experience in achieving Universal Child Immunization in 1990. These documents were produced for the Tunis meeting.

38. In cooperation with LAS, UNICEF plans to promote various aspects of the Pan-Arab Plan through regional consultations and workshops, including a workshop on the Arab family, a workshop on implementing national programmes of action at the gubernatorial or provincial and municipal level, a regional consultation on education for girls, a non-governmental organization forum and a meeting on developing fund-raising strategies in the region. In addition, UNICEF will support thematic kits on priority concerns of the Pan-Arab Plan in such areas as measles control strategies, polio surveillance, malnutrition, micronutrients, malnutrition, breast-feeding and the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, and children and the environment, as well as a summary of the Pan-Arab Plan and the relevant resolutions.

39. The above activities are aimed, among other things, at assisting LAS in efforts undertaken to strengthen its capacities and impact on promoting the well-being of the Arab child.

D. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

40. During the period under review, cooperation between the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations was further strengthened, in particular with regard to the inter-sectoral project initiated by the UNCTAD secretariat on prospects for sustained development of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

41. The project comprises the following: a thorough examination of the social and economic situation of the Palestinian people during the past 25 years of occupation; the identification of impediments to the sustained growth of the economy and of feasible measures for its revival under present circumstances; an investigation of future prospects for the economy's sustained growth and development under alternative scenarios, reflecting varying assumptions and their implications on the aggregate and sectoral economic and social indicators. The project is further aimed at formulating a consolidated framework of feasible

strategies and policy options for the economic and social development of the Palestinian territory into the year 2000 and beyond, including appropriate action required from the international community and the Palestinian people. As part of the implementation of the project, a total of 25 specific studies are being completed at the field level by local experts, covering all major economic and social sectors. In order to guide the work of the local experts in a concerted manner, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared a study of a quantitative framework identifying the optional courses for the future sustained growth and development of the Palestinian economy in the light of historical trends and possible future developments affecting the economy.

42. The Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO) and the General Secretariat of LAS have made financial contributions to the project.

43. The UNCTAD secretariat has also maintained its regular consultations with the Department of Palestine at the General Secretariat of LAS on issues of mutual concern, including the exchange of documents and information.

E. United Nations Development Programme

44. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported the establishment of an Arab Regional Information System Network ARIS-NET-RAB/86/010), a very modern and sophisticated documentation and information centre for the League of Arab States, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This builds on previous assistance to establish the Arab League Documentation Centre (ALDOC) (RAB/79/030 - ALDOC) which promotes the development of information activities in the Arab region and provides information services to selected user groups.

45. UNDP is also supporting a LAS administrative and management development project by developing the organizational structure of LAS departments, setting up work methods and procedures, installing and applying Management Information Systems, and drawing up manpower development plans and personnel procedures. The project is co-funded by the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations AGFUND and executed by the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat.

Cooperation with the LAS specialized and associated agencies

46. The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) is also executing UNDP projects which include the following:

(a) RAB/89/009 - a preparatory assistance project with the International Centre for Agricultural Research and Dry Areas (ICARDA) providing assistance to Cereal Disease Surveillance and Germplasm Enhancement;

(b) RAB/89/015 - a research study project with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) on the economics of barley; AFESD is co-funding this project;

(c) RAB/89/018 - see paragraph 47;

(d) RAB/89/025 - Establishment of regional software technology centres aimed at developing state-of-the-art capacity to develop software technology and engineering; AFESD is co-funding this project;

(e) RAB/91/016 - Establishment of the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) which is aimed at becoming the focus of environmental activities as related to sustainable development in the Arab region and the Mediterranean basin. As an intergovernmental organization, this recently created centre, which is supported and funded jointly by UNDP and AFESD, has been fully endorsed by LAS.

47. The Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) has been involved in a preparatory assistance project on the Utilization of Cotton Crop Residues in the Production of Animal Feeds (RAB/89/018 - PA) with AFESD as executing agency. AOAD is executing a UNDP project to assist countries of the region in upgrading the national capacities in agricultural research management through participation in country agricultural technology management systems studies and national and regional workshops (RAB/89/027). AOAD is also executing a UNDP project to increase the production and productivity of oilseed crops in the participating Arab countries, in harmony with national development plans of the countries concerned (RAB/89/024).

48. The Arab Telecommunications Union (ATU) serves on the Steering Committee of a UNDP telecommunication development project (RAB/89/001) which is assisting Arab telecommunication administrations in establishing an Arab Regional Data Communication Network and news services.

49. Under a regional umbrella project (RAB/88/005), UNDP provided assistance to the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) in the enhancement of private sector involvement in development. AMF is the intergovernmental implementing agency for two projects supporting the Arab Trade Financing Programme (ATFP): RAB/88/018, a project aimed at the establishment of systems and procedures for financing intra-Arab trade, and RAB/91/004, which builds on the previous phase and continues support for ATFP through the establishment of an information core to be developed gradually into an on-line intra-Arab trade information service network. UNDP also sponsored jointly with AMF and ATFP the Seminar on Technical Cooperation for the Development of Arab Trade, held at Abu Dhabi from 10 to 12 April 1993, and is currently preparing the framework of a regional trade programme based on the recommendations of the Seminar.

50. In collaboration with Inter Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation, UNDP completed the study on the Performance of Arab Investments in Arab Countries under project RAB/87/012. The study was aimed at determining the factors affecting the success or failure of private Arab investment in seven countries; it was co-funded by IAIGC.

51. The Arab Maritime Transport Academy (AMTA) has implemented a UNDP project for the establishment of a network of mutually supportive Arab training institutions within the region (RAB/88/010).

52. The Arab Industrial Development Organization (AIDO) is cooperating in and is co-funding with UNDP, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and other agencies, project RAB/87/013 on the establishment of

engineering infrastructure through the development of the engineering industry by analysing intermediate markets (casting, forging and tool-room products).

53. In implementation of projects RAB/84/001 and RAB/86/056, the Arab Civil Aviation Council (ACAC) collaborated with UNDP in providing assistance to the Civil Aviation College at Doha, Qatar, with a view to establishing self-reliance in the provision of civil aviation technical services.

54. The Arab Postal Union (APU) was the intergovernmental cooperating agency in the implementation of project RAB/83/010 on "Postal Development and Training of Specialists". The project was aimed at the improvement and expansion of the modes of transport and communications in the region as one of the important means of enhancing economic and social integration and cooperation.

55. UNDP has been cooperating closely with the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) in carrying out projects to enable the labour administrations in the Arab region to participate in the elaboration and implementation of economic and social development plans, the improvement of working conditions and environment, the full utilization of human resources and the application of labour laws and regulations. Executed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the projects included RAB/83/002 - Regional Arab Centre for Labour Administration, and RAB/90/017 - Regional Arab Programme for Labour Administration (RAPLA). UNDP sponsored jointly with ALO and ILO the Seminar on Employment Policies, held at Cairo in May 1993. UNDP has embarked on a second phase of the project for RAPLA (RAB/93/002) with a view to ensuring the full transfer of RAPLA to ALO.

F. United Nations Environment Programme

56. The Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) developed a joint priority programme to combat desertification, increase land green cover, stem industrial pollution and promote environmental education, awareness and information. During its sixteenth session, the UNEP Governing Council approved in its 1992-1993 biennium budget, subject to availability of funds, US$ 750,000 for a core programme and US$ 600,000 for a supplementary programme for cooperation with CAMRE. When LAS transferred it headquarters to Cairo in 1991, UNEP expanded its liaison office and began to develop with CAMRE a suitable project proposal for 1992-1993 to implement the joint priority programme and to strengthen and support CAMRE institutions.

57. In cooperation with LAS, UNEP approved a project of US$ 100,000 for 1993 which was to be completed during the first half of that year.

58. Under the project, CAMRE and UNEP organized the following workshop for 1992-1993:

(a) Combating desertification: North Africa Green Belt Experience: water methods used for soil conservation; development and protection of the range resources in Radiat Al Sham;

(b) Combating industrial pollution: Status of industrial pollution in the Arab Region; general Guidelines for the detailed diagnosis of environmental impacts of different industries;

(c) Environmental Education, Awareness and Information: Environmental models in official Arab education programmes at all levels.

59. Furthermore, CAMRE in close cooperation with UNEP, developed 13 programmes on the environment reflecting its plans for the coming decades. These programmes are closely related to Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. The first meeting of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab region aimed at coordinating all environmental activities in the region was held at Amman on 17 April 1993.

G. United Nations Population Fund

60. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the League of Arab States enjoy an excellent working partnership. UNFPA provided assistance to LAS in creating a Population Research Unit (PRU) responsible for undertaking population and population-related research for advocacy and policy matters. Through the years, PRU carried out the important role of making ministerial councils of health and of social affairs sensitive to population matters. More recently, under its regular budget, LAS hired specialists and contributed financially for the activities of PRU which is receiving technical assistance from UNFPA. The Unit's current activities include analysis of demographic, socio-economic and health data at country and regional levels; research on migration; study on the status of Arab women in society and their contribution to development; and dissemination of information on population.

61. The Pan-Arab Project for Child Development (PAPCHILD) is another joint project of UNFPA and LAS. The project is funded jointly by LAS, AGFUND, UNFPA, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the World Bank and the United Nations. Its objective is to assist 14 non-oil producing Arab countries to undertake a comprehensive demographic, socio-economic and health survey to establish the levels and trends of maternal and child health indicators including, inter alia, contraceptive prevalency and maternal mortality. To date, surveys have been undertaken in Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, the Sudan and Yemen. Surveys in the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia are ongoing. Plans for a survey to be undertaken in Lebanon are under way.

62. The third area of cooperation is the Arab Population Conference which was held at Amman in April 1993. The conference was co-sponsored by ESCWA, LAS and UNFPA. LAS participated actively in all the meetings of the organizing committee and provided funds to cover the cost of participation of its staff and participants from less developed countries in the Arab region.

H. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

63. As a United Nations agency dealing with over 2.7 million Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Occupied Territory of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) views its relationship with LAS as an important factor in its work. To this end, there is regular flow of information and close cooperation between the LAS Secretariat and UNRWA.

64. At the invitation of the League of Arab States, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA attended the meeting of the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, held at Cairo in April 1993 and briefed the Council on UNRWA operations, focusing on the financial shortfall faced by the agency in 1993.

65. The Commissioner-General of UNRWA and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States maintain regular contact. UNRWA representatives contribute to, and participate in, various technical meetings held under the auspices of LAS. For example, in November 1992, UNRWA participated in a meeting on the Arab Child, held at Tunis.

66. The League of Arab States continues to provide strong support to UNRWA and has intensified its efforts to urge its States members to increase their contributions to the agency.

I. World Food Programme

67. Cooperation between member countries of the League of Arab States and the World Food Programme (WFP) is long-standing. WFP current commitments to 32 ongoing development projects in LAS member countries amount to US$ 530 million. Most of the currently operational development projects are in the agricultural sector and contribute to enhancing the sustained ability of the land to provide people and their animals with the basic means of sustenance. Other operational projects in Arab countries concentrate on human resources development, principally on achieving universal primary education and improving access to mother-child health care services in rural areas.

68. In 1992, WFP food resources devoted to life-sustaining emergency operations rose to 60 per cent of all shipments. This was brought about by the dramatic rise in the number of displaced and refugee population groups in need of emergency food relief resulting mainly from armed conflicts in many parts of the world and from natural disasters. WFP dispatched an all-time record of 5.2 million tons of food to relieve the emergency food needs of an estimated 27 million people. LAS member countries were the major recipients of WFP emergency food assistance in 1992, in particular, Somalia (US$ 128 million), Iraq (US$ 80 million) and the Sudan (US$ 53 million). In addition, WFP provided relief assistance to displaced persons in Djibouti and Yemen.

J. Economic Commission for Africa

69. Direct relations between the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the League of Arab States are very limited, although potential for deeper cooperation exists. Interaction between ECA and LAS is mainly through the assistance given by the Commission to the African member States of the League within the framework of its work programme and activities.

70. Outlined below are activities carried out by ECA in 1992 and those envisaged for 1993 in African countries that are member States of LAS.

Economic integration and development

71. Through its Tangier-based Multinational Programming and Operational Centre (MULPOC), ECA assists African member States of LAS in their economic integration and development efforts. In this regard, ECA carried out the following projects in 1992: (a) a study on preventive measures against locust and grasshopper invasion in North Africa; (b) proposals for fostering trade in agricultural products as a step towards the establishment of an agricultural common market in North Africa; (c) a study on the establishment of wheat and cereal authority in North Africa; and (d) a study on the promotion and strengthening of economic integration in North Africa.

72. In 1993, ECA plans to organize seminars on the development and exploitation of fishery resources and on common strategies and policies in the fields of petroleum, gas and electric power in the context of promoting secured and stable energy production and supply in North Africa. In addition, ECA is studying the possibility of establishing a Preferential Trade Area in North Africa as a vehicle and machinery towards greater economic cooperation and integration involving all the countries of the subregion.

Pan-African Development Information System

73. The ECA Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS) cooperates with LAS in the field of information technology, including the Arabization of software. PADIS has close relations with the Arab League Documentation Centre of LAS. In collaboration with ALDOC, PADIS developed the North African Development Information System (NADIS) and the Arab Regional Information System Network (ARISNET). PADIS and ALDOC also organized joint training programmes and have trained nine nationals from North Africa. PADIS also interacts with other specialized organizations of LAS.

Statistics

74. In the field of statistics, constituents of LAS participate in the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers as well as in seminars and workshops organized by ECA.

Natural resources

75. Advisory services and data collection missions were fielded by ECA to Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco and Tunisia on the rational use

and conservation of water resources in these countries. Based on the information collected, ECA prepared a detailed study on the subject.

76. In marine affairs, ECA fielded advisory service and information collection missions to a number of African countries that are members of LAS, and prepared a technical report on legal arrangements for the development of joint ventures among developed and developing countries for the exploitation and exploration of marine resources.

Trade

77. ECA will participate, as a collaborating agency with OAU and LAS in the First Afro-Arab Trade Fair to be held at Tunis, from 22 to 31 October 1993.

78. In view of the central role of ECA in promoting socio-economic development and integration of the African region as a whole, and of the mutual interest of ECA and LAS in supporting the development efforts of their common member States, it is the desire of ECA to establish closer formal cooperation between its secretariat and that of LAS.

K. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

79. During the period under review, efforts were intensified to harmonize activities with the League of Arab States in order to avoid duplication of work.

80. The Statistics Division of ESCWA participated in the seventeenth session of the Standing Committee on Statistics of LAS, held at Cairo in July 1992. The Transport and Communications Division (TCD) of ESCWA collaborated with the Committee of Experts established by the technical secretariat of LAS in reviewing the various documents submitted by different countries and agencies, and proposed the methodology for the study to be undertaken for a Unified Arab Triptick (UAT). The Division played an active role in the meetings of the Committee of Experts held in April and October 1992.

81. The Transport and Communications Division prepared an outline of a three-stage study which will include the collection of up-to-date information on existing road plans for links connecting LAS member countries, and which will formulate a plan comprising four Trans-Arab Corridors including two in Asian-Arab countries, with ferry services from Aqaba to Nuwaibi in Suez connecting both corridors. The study will be completed by the Regional Arab Road Networks.

82. The Arab Population Conference held at Amman from 4 to 8 April 1993 was convened jointly by ESCWA, LAS and UNFPA. The Conference adopted the Amman Second Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World which reflects the Arab position on the subject. The results of the Conference as expressed in the Declaration will constitute the Arab contribution to the preparation of the United Nations 1994 International Conference on Population and Development to be held at Cairo in September 1994.

83. Within the Industrial Development Programme, ESCWA has collaborated with LAS in the implementation of the "Special Programme for Industrial Development

in the Arab Countries". In this connection, a meeting was held at Cairo on 28 and 29 November 1992 in which the project documents were reviewed and the plan of action for future work and financing was set up.

84. Under the Environment Programme, and as a follow-up to Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), two preparatory meetings involving United Nations regional organizations and other intergovernmental regional organizations were held during 1992. The meetings sought agreement on the terms of reference and mandates for establishing a Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCED). The first meeting of the Committee was held at the ESCWA headquarters at Amman in April 1993 to agree on an interim plan of action for the implementation at the regional level of Agenda 21.

L. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

85. In the context of its cooperation with the LAS secretariat, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) co-sponsored with LAS and the Government of Egypt, the "Arab States Regional Conference on National Shelter Strategies", held at Cairo in December 1992. The Conference, organized within the framework of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, aimed at furthering cooperation among member States of the League in the formulation and implementation of national shelter strategies, as well as in the monitoring of the performance of the shelter sector. In addition, a Data Management Advisory Mission to the LAS secretariat was undertaken by UNCHS (Habitat) during March and April 1993 in order to assess the computerization needs of the LAS technical secretariat for housing and reconstruction and to introduce the latest computer applications developed by UNCHS (Habitat). Further, a representative of LAS participated in the fourteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements held at Nairobi in April and May 1993.

86. At the country level, there are currently 24 ongoing projects in 13 Arab States. At the regional level, within the framework of its regional project on "Training of Trainers in Urban Finance and Management", UNCHS (Habitat) has conducted a series of six workshops for the benefit of senior officials from government agencies, local authorities and training institutions. The workshops address issues of training and human resources development in support of decentralization and administrative reform.

87. UNCHS (Habitat) continues to regularly disseminate, either directly from its Nairobi headquarters, or through its Regional Information Office for Arab States located at Amman, Jordan, information and publications on human settlements and on issues of particular concern to member States of LAS.

M. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

88. Cooperation between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the League of Arab States has, over the last nine years, developed mainly in the field of international protection of refugees, asylum seekers and persons in refugee-like situations.

89. Regular contacts have been maintained between the two organizations. The question of cooperation was discussed at length by the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General of LAS in December 1992 at the LAS headquarters at Cairo.

90. Within the context of increased global awareness of the social, economic and environmental impact of population movements, several areas of cooperation have been identified and it is expected that further contacts will enable the two parties to elaborate concrete collaborative activities and mechanisms for future cooperation.

91. The most important issues under consideration by LAS and UNHCR are the following:

(a) The conclusion of the Cooperation Agreement between UNHCR and LAS;

(b) The finalization of the Arab convention on refugees;

(c) The organization of seminars on refugee law in the Arab countries;

(d) The organization of a regional seminar for non-governmental organizations on refugees and asylum seekers with the main objective of making optimum use of the organizations' capacity to disseminate information, and their advocacy, fund-raising and operational potential in the resolution of refugee situations in Arab countries and other regions where some of these organizations are already involved in assistance programmes for refugees;

(e) Follow-up on previous discussions with the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) to identify areas of cooperation in the field of educational assistance to refugees; and

(f) The strengthening of UNHCR cooperation with other specialized organizations of LAS in the fields of common interest.

N. International Labour Organisation

92. The Skills Development Programme for Arab Countries (SDEPAC) continued to carry out its operations. SDEPAC organized regional seminars on skill testing and certification, integration of women in training activities and return migration and its implications on training. Furthermore, SDEPAC intensified its activities related to training information systems, development and exchange of training materials and preparation of the modular skill training programmes. SDEPAC also played a catalytic role in arranging technical assistance on the basis of technical cooperation among developing countries.

93. The Regional Arab Programme for Labour Administration (RAPLA) continued to conduct its activities. It organized two training courses, one on the training of trainers on labour inspection in collaboration with the Arab Occupational Safety and Health Institute, and the other on the training of trainers on conditions of work. RAPLA also organized, in collaboration with ILO, a tripartite regional seminar on working conditions. RAPLA intensified its activities relating to the translation into Arabic of various ILO manuals, including those on international labour standards, labour inspection on chemical safety, labour administration in a changing world, and vocational guidance. RAPLA also prepared a guide on labour administration in the Arab countries. A proposal for the third phase of the project was formulated in consultation with the concerned parties and agreement was reached, in principle, on the financing of the project.

94. The ILO/UNDP regional project "Support to Arab migration policies" organized a regional seminar to discuss the findings of the studies undertaken within the framework of the project. A proposal for the regional project on migration policies of the Arab labour-sending countries was formulated in accordance with the recommendations of the seminar.

95. Following close cooperation between the ILO and LAS on the establishment of the Arab League Documentation Centre, the ILO Central Library and Documentation Branch has, since 1983, provided the League, every six months, with records from its bibliographic database, LABORDOC, which relate to Arab countries.

96. ILO was represented at the high-level Arab regional meeting on the protection of children organized by the League of Arab States, as well as at the general meeting on cooperation between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States.

97. At the ILO/ALO Joint Committee meeting held in February 1992, an agreement was reached on a two-year programme of joint activities such as seminars and studies in the technical fields of employment, vocational training, employers' activities, child labour, women workers and international labour standards. It was also agreed to collaborate in the translation of four ILO publications into Arabic and in the production of radio programmes.

98. Assistance was provided to the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs in the Gulf States in conducting a seminar on labour inspection. Work has begun on a child labour project with AGFUND.

99. Multidisciplinary missions to Bahrain, Jordan and Qatar were undertaken to assist in fields such as manpower planning, labour market information, social security, cooperatives, enterprise development and vocational rehabilitation. In addition, the Office continued to grant fellowships to participants in ILO training activities.

100. A number of missions were undertaken by regional advisers in the fields of employment and development, vocational training, employers' activities, workers' activities, vocational rehabilitation and women workers' questions.

O. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

1. Technical studies

101. During the period under review, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) prepared a number of technical studies which were of relevance to the work of the League of Arab States. The studies included the following: Integration of Sustainability and Environmental Considerations with Agricultural Policy Analysis in the Near East Region; Impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes on Agricultural Development and Performance in the Near East Region, with particular reference to Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia; Genetic Basis for the Formation of Broiler and Egg Chicken Lines, and various technical reports related to FAO meetings, workshops and conferences organized in the region.

2. Regional meetings

102. LAS actively participated in the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN), held at Cairo in April 1992. It was represented at the ICN, held in Rome in December 1992.

103. LAS and some of its specialized organizations such as AOAD, the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD) and the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) are participating actively in specialized fields in the Regional Inter-Agency Task Forces which have been initiated by the FAO Regional Office for the Near East.

104. The FAO Regional Office for the Near East has cooperated closely with AOAD and other LAS specialized organizations in preparing for the following meetings for 1993:

(a) Consultations of Experts on the Status of Seed Technology in the Near East (30 March-2 April 1993 at Tunis), organized by the Regional Office for the Near East with AOAD participation;

(b) Regional Workshop on the Management and Development of the Rangeland in the Arab Region (3-6 April 1993 at Amman), organized by the Regional Office for the Near East and LAS with the participation of AOAD and ACSAD;

(c) Second Arab Conference on Perspectives of Modern Biotechnology (24-28 April 1993 at Amman), organized by the FAO Regional Office for the Near East, the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils and the Arab Union of Manufacturers of Pharmaceutical and Medical Appliances;

(d) Regional Workshop on the Utilization of Agro-industrial Wastes (15-18 November 1993 at Damascus) being organized by the Regional Office for the Near East, AOAD and UNESCO.

3. Technical cooperation

105. FAO continued to provide to various development programmes of the LAS specialized organizations, technical support which included technical consultations organized by the FAO Regional Office for the Near East and AOAD to coordinate and streamline cooperative programmes and to implement joint activities in the region being served by both organizations. These programmes and activities included organizing consultations of experts in fields of priority interest; strengthening activities on technical and economic cooperation among developing countries in the Arab region; conducting workshops and training activities, as well as organizing regional conferences on subjects of interest to the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) in the Arab region. FAO initiated cooperation with AOAD in the field of plant protection, particularly in relation to the work of the FAO Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Near East.

106. There has been considerable cooperation in the fisheries sector between FAO and LAS specialized bodies. The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) agreed in June 1992 to provide a second grant of US$ 370,000 to support the extension until the end of 1993 of Phase II of the FAO Fish Marketing Information, Promotion and Technical Advisory Services for Arab Countries (INFOSAMAK) project. Contacts were established with AOAD and with the LAS Economic Affairs Department to ensure the continuation of INFOSAMAK after termination of Phase II of the project as an independent Arab organization under the jurisdiction of Bahrain. The FAO Regional Office for the Near East participated in the Arab Federation of Fish Producers (AFFP) General Assembly and assisted in the organization of the Third Arab Seminar for Planning and Development of Farming Fish and Crustaceans, held at Damascus from 9 to 12 May 1993. FAO presented a paper entitled "Proposal to Establish an Information System for the Development of Aquaculture in the Arab Countries". FAO provided financial support amounting to US$ 4,000 towards the organization of the seminar.

4. Exchange of information

107. Following a request from LAS, FAO provided the League with the Arabic versions of the Agricultural Extension Reference Manual "The WCARRD - Ten Years of Follow-up and the Guide to Extension Training".

108. During 1992, exchange of information on various subjects was intensified at the regional level through the work of the specialized regional Inter-Agency Task Forces. LAS and its specialized organizations - AOAD, ACSAD, CAEU - have been participating actively in the work of the Task Forces, particularly in the following areas: Land and Water Resources; Environment and Sustainable Development; Biotechnology Applications and Transfer of Technology; Food and Nutrition; Human Resources and Gender Development; Plant Production and Protection; and Animal Production and Health.

P. International Civil Aviation Organization

109. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) maintains close liaison with the League of Arab States, through the ICAO Middle East Regional Office located at Cairo, on matters relating to civil aviation. ICAO follows with interest the action of LAS relating to the establishment of a civil aviation commission.

110. The League of Arab States is invited to relevant ICAO meetings, including sessions of the Assembly of ICAO, on air transport regulatory policy.

111. ICAO executes an important technical cooperation programme in many member States of LAS. The programme provides training assistance, civil aviation expertise and advice on developing the civil aviation infrastructure. ICAO has assisted in the establishment of several training institutes in the Middle East region, in full cooperation with UNDP and some Arab countries. The ICAO TRAINAIR Programme, which seeks to standardize training curricula and methods, has been introduced by ICAO in training centres at Cairo and Amman where it has been actively pursued. The Third TRAINAIR Coordination Conference was held at Cairo in April 1992.

Q. World Health Organization

112. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued its cooperation with the League of Arab States as follows:

(a) Implementing the PAPCHILD project to cover the rest of the member States;

(b) Processing the Arabization of medical education;

(c) Strengthening the WHO publication programmes which produce standardization of medical terminology in Arabic;

(d) Updating and following up the implementation of the strategy for health development in the Arabic world;

(e) Strengthening and implementing the priority areas agreed upon in Arab strategy, especially in programmes dealing with acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), essential drugs, blood transfusions, protection from radiation and environmental health.

R. World Bank

113. The World Bank's Vice-President for the Middle East and North Africa Region visited the LAS headquarters at Cairo in 1992 and held meetings with the League's Secretary-General and the Assistant-Secretary-General for Economic Affairs. It was agreed then that the World Bank and LAS would coordinate their regional activities, especially with regard to technical cooperation, but that they would need to establish a protocol. The two organizations were working towards developing constructive cooperation between them in the near future.

S. International Monetary Fund

114. The Africa Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) continues to be actively involved in assisting the six Arab League member countries (Algeria, Djibouti, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia and Tunisia) covered by the Department in the elaboration and implementation of their economic and financial policies. In 1992, there were 13 staff visits to these countries for regular consultations and discussions of policies under programmes supported by Fund resources. The outstanding use of Fund resources by six Arab League States covered by the Africa Department amounted to 1.26 billion special drawing rights at the end of 1991. The Fund provides technical assistance to these countries in a number of areas, including the banking sector, financial sector reform, budgetary policies, exchange and trade systems, and statistics. Visits by non-resident experts amounted to 0.2 man-year in 1991. In addition, there were three resident experts during the year.

T. Universal Postal Union

115. The Arab Permanent Postal Commission (APPC), an organ of the League of Arab States, was established in 1992 as a Restricted Union of the Universal Postal Union within the meaning of article 8 of the Constitution of UPU. APPC is composed of the postal administrations of the countries which are members of the League of Arab States. The General Secretariat of LAS assumes the functions of the technical secretariat of APPC.

116. Following the creation of APPC, UPU began talks began with that organization with a view to having a cooperation agreement along the lines of those adopted with other Restricted Unions.

117. Some Arabic-speaking countries have established, within UPU, a language group which has installed a centralized translation service at the International Bureau. This service is directed by the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, which also performs the functions of spokesperson for the Arabic language group.

118. The following five areas have been identified as priority areas of the Arab countries for 1992-1995: restructuring of management; knowledge of the market and commercial strategies; quality of service and operational strategies; human resources and training; and acquisition of technology: buildings and postal installations. Based on these priorities, joint activities in instructor training courses and postal planning courses have been organized using UPU resources and consultants originating from Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia.

119. UPU is also financing nine integrated multi-year national projects in Arab countries to carry out various priority activities in the postal area. Moreover, the UPU Regional Adviser for the Arab countries whose office is in Cairo, has drawn up projects for the development of the postal services in some 10 countries. These projects are to be financed jointly by the recipient countries themselves, by UNDP or through other sources of financing.

120. UPU is currently acting as the executing agency for the following UNDP national projects: electronic mail in Egypt; training and modernization of

postal services in Qatar; development of postal and financial services in Yemen; support for the quality and improvement of the postal service management in Tunisia; and improvement of the postal service management in Oman.

121. From 1990 to 1992, 14 postal administrations of member countries of LAS were visited by UPU consultants in connection with the quality of postal service. The programme for 1993 includes visits to five administrations. In 1992, 11 postal administrations of member countries of LAS took part in quality control operations relating to 68 postal links, organized by the International Bureau.

U. World Meteorological Organization

122. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has continued to grant, under its regular budget and its voluntary cooperation programme, short-term and long-term fellowships to a number of Arab States. Data processing and equipment for maintenance facilities have also been provided to some countries under the WMO voluntary cooperation programme. Fellowships are being offered by some Arab States under this programme. Since three of the 17 WMO regional meteorological training centres are located in the Arab region, WMO has continued to monitor the relevant activities with the main purpose of ensuring high standard of performance.

123. Technical assistance projects funded through UNDP for the development of the national meteorological and hydrological services continue to be in Algeria, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. A second phase of the project for the operation and maintenance of the Central Forecasting Office in the United Arab Emirates was recently signed by that Government and UNDP. Trust Fund projects are also being implemented in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the Sudan.

124. Under the project "Global Monitoring of Greenhouse Gases including Ozone", financed through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), several observation stations will be established in developing countries, including one Arab State.

125. While WMO recognizes that in the post-UNCED era execution of operational activities for development at the national level is a leading principle concerning projects to implement Agenda 21 and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, WMO also gives due consideration to possible significant value added services and cost savings under regional projects. In this regard, mention may be made of the African Centre for Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD) which is contributing to the social and economic development of the Arab countries in Africa, as well as of the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), which is aimed at combating environmental problems and at promoting sustainable development of the countries concerned.

126. Enhanced coordination between the WMO and the Permanent Meteorological Committee of the League of Arab States would be particularly beneficial to regional/subregional projects in matters related to weather monitoring and prediction, pollution monitoring, land degradation, water resources management and quality control.

V. International Maritime Organization

127. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) undertook the following activities during 1992 in cooperation with LAS member countries:

Algeria (ALG/89/001)

128. Under the project "Specialized Training of Seafarers and Technical shore-based Personnel", training aids and equipment were provided to the Institut supérieur d'études maritimes de Bou-Ismail (Algeria), for conducting IMO model courses.

Yemen (YEM/92/024)

129. The Government of Yemen, sponsor of the "Maritime Training" project, supplied training aids and equipment. A staff training programme was initiated, including IMO model courses, for the training of trainers and maritime personnel.

130. In conjunction with the Government of Yemen, IMO has been able to secure additional bilateral and regional resources for equipment and the conducting of further training courses.

Morocco (MOR/89/001)

131. Under the Government-executed project "Training of Trainers", the Moroccan Government and UNDP awarded IMO a subcontract to implement the IMO model course on Maritime Search and Rescue - Administrator at the Institut supérieur d'études maritimes, a branch of the World Maritime University. The course was conducted on a regional basis with participants from Tunisia.

Regional activities

Regional training at the Arab Maritime Transport Academy, Sharjah (RAB/88/010)

132. The Arab Maritime Transport Academy (AMTA) Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, has closed down following a decision of the Arab Ministers for Transport and Communications which recognized the Arab Maritime Transport Academy of Alexandria, Egypt, as the only Regional Arab Maritime Academy for Arab States. The transfer of training equipment from Sharjah to Alexandria has been completed.

Assistance to the Association of African Maritime Training Institutes (RAB/86/023)

133. Project activities carried out in 1991 included the finalization of the draft common guidelines on a harmonized system of education, examination and certification; fact-finding tours to the Association of African Maritime Training Institutes (AAMTI) institutes to assess development needs and TCDC potential, as well as to establish a common database system introduction on a regional basis of IMO model courses. An IMO/AAMTI Congress was held on 25 and 26 November 1991 with all AAMTI members, with a view to elaborating a

plan of action for the implementation of a harmonized system of education, examination and certification.

W. World Intellectual Property Organization

Industry property

134. In the field of industrial property, the World Industrial Property Organization (WIPO) executed several regional UNDP-financed projects with the objective of strengthening the basis of the technological development of the Arab countries, through the enforcement of the industrial property system and the promotion of its effective use. One of the projects was aimed at the establishment of an appropriate infrastructure for the collection, analysis and dissemination of technological information to the widest possible range of users in industry and in research and development institutions.

135. In cooperation with the Governments concerned, WIPO has organized training courses, regional and national seminars, as well as other meetings in the Arab region.

136. In July 1992, a regional training course on the Role of Industrial Property in Development in the Arab countries was organized by WIPO at Cairo, in cooperation with the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) of Egypt and with the assistance of UNDP. A total of 24 participants from 11 countries were present.

137. Expert missions visited the region on a regular basis and WIPO advised some of the Arab countries on the revision and updating of their industrial property legislation. WIPO also assisted the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in the formulation of a uniform patent law for the States concerned and proposed the necessary implementing regulations.

X. International Fund for Agricultural Development

138. The operations of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in the Arab world commenced in 1979. To date, 58 projects at a total cost of US$ 3.358 billion have been financed, with IFAD commitment amounting to US$ 642,000 million.

139. The activities of the Fund stem from increasing concerns about the ever widening gap in food security in the Arab world owing to limited natural resources, coupled with a rapid increase in population. The current Arab world annual food imports of about US$ 20 billion is estimated to reach US$ 30 billion by the turn of the century.

140. The bulk of IFAD projects are lodged in rainfed subsectors, where 80 per cent of staple food is produced and where the great majority of the small disadvantaged farmers reside.

141. Working within the traditional and cultural realities prevailing in the Arab world, all IFAD projects in the region are designed with specific measures

addressed to rural women, with due consideration given their roles as housewives, farm labourers and heads of rural households.

142. In addition to direct project financing, IFAD has been giving financial support in the amount of US$ 50.6 million to regional institutions in the Arab world established to promote research and training, such as ACSAD, ICARDA and AOAD.

143. A cooperation agreement between the League of Arab States and IFAD is currently being finalized.

Y. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

144. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has continued to cooperate with the League of Arab States, as in the previous years, by providing technical assistance to the member countries of LAS, as appropriate, in the context of normal GATT activities and/or the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations. GATT has also been providing opportunities for training facilities in its trade policy courses to officials from member States of LAS.